

Planning Principles

The IHL planning process is grounded in six principles, or core values, which undergird the ongoing work of universities and of the trustees.

1. **Higher Education Matters.** Universities are the wellsprings of civilization and human capital. Ours must be vital for our citizenry to thrive.
2. **Planning Begins With Self-Assessment and Research.** The divides of history, geography, wealth, and culture are particular threats to diverse institutions and trustees. A willingness to honestly and collegially address issues is central to IHL planning. Well-researched, factual information leavens disputes into discussion.
3. **Successful Institutions Focus on Their Assets.** Our universities are home to rich traditions, diverse environments, and exceptional talent. By nurturing and building on these assets, each of our institutions can flourish within the IHL system.
4. **System Planning Requires Collaboration.** As diverse institutions and individuals, we need to pay attention to building institutional cooperation, eschewing insidious competition, broadening leadership, and promoting collaborative decision-making. Collaboration must also extend to other agencies and organizations, particularly other education entities.
5. **Viable Institutions Incorporate Resource Stewardship and Accountability in All Functions.** Trustees and universities have a duty to be good stewards. Accountability and evaluation ensure integrity and effectiveness and will be reviewed annually.
6. **Equity and High Expectations Should Undergird All Aspects of Higher Education.** Given our state's troubled past and systemic educational shortcomings, we need to employ equity and embed high expectations in all our work. These core building blocks will anchor a foundation upon which lasting successes can be built for all levels of education.

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System Plan of Excellence

A Plan for the Mississippi



Public University System

Board of Trustees of State
Institutions of Higher Learning

Thomas D. Layzell, Commissioner

Mission Statements

State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL System)

The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL System), under the governance of its Board of Trustees, will operate as a strong public university system with eight distinct, mission-driven universities, and will enhance the quality of life of Mississippians by effectively meeting their diverse educational needs. In so doing, the IHL system will be characterized by, and become nationally recognized for, its emphasis on student achievement and on preparing responsible citizens; its adherence to high academic standards and to quality in instruction, research, service, and facilities; and its commitment to affordability, accessibility, and accountability.

Board of Trustees

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to manage and control Mississippi's eight institutions of higher learning in accordance with the Constitution and to see that the IHL System mission is accomplished. To do so, the Board will operate a coordinated system of higher education, establish prudent governance policies, employ capable chief executives, and require legal, fiscal and programmatic accountability. The Board will annually report to the Legislature and the citizenry on the needs and accomplishments of the IHL System.

Institutions

Each institution of higher learning has a distinct history and traditions, and a distinct mission to be performed within the context of the Board and System missions, but they also share certain common characteristics. The common characteristics include:

1. a commitment to excellence and responsiveness;
2. a commitment to programs and activities that enhance the undergraduate experience and strengthen general education;
3. a commitment to a teaching/learning environment, both inside and outside the classroom, that sustains instructional excellence, serves a diverse and well-prepared student body, provides academic assistance, and promotes high levels of student achievement;
4. a commitment to scholarly and creative work and research that is consistent with the university's mission;
5. a commitment to public service, continuing education, technical assistance, and economic development programs and activities that respond to societal needs;
6. a commitment to accountability, efficiency, productivity and the effective utilization of technology;
7. a commitment to collaboration with public and private partners as a means of more effectively utilizing institutional resources; and
8. a commitment to ethnic and gender diversity.

Goals

Five-year Goals for the system have been developed in order for the Planning Principles to come to fruition. Successful accomplishment of these Goals will strengthen not only the educational and economic foundation in the state, but also the comprehensive societal well-being of the state, the region, the nation, and beyond. Strategies used to meet these system goals are set by the individual universities in order to ensure respect for the distinctive mission and scope of each institution.

1. Secure stable funding from the state;
2. Implement the Ayers settlement;
3. Provide high quality instructional programs that are affordable, accessible, and student centered;
4. Provide support programs and services that enhance student recruiting and retention, timely completion of degrees, and attainment of student goals;
5. Encourage research and creative activities to enhance instruction, generate new knowledge, and contribute to economic development;
6. Provide informal education, technical assistance, and other public services that respond to societal needs;
7. Promote accountability, efficiency, productivity and effective utilization of technology;
8. Promote ethnic and gender diversity;
9. Enhance programs and utilization of resources by development of cooperative efforts and partnerships;
10. Enhance public awareness and support of IHL programs and services; and
11. Promote and implement the Higher Education Summit recommendations.

Priorities

To accomplish the long-range goals, priorities will be set annually. All goals are important and will be supported each year, but not every goal will have specific priorities associated with it each year.

1. Seek support for increasing and stabilizing state funding for IHL; (Goal 1)
2. Implement the Ayers settlement; (Goal 2)
3. Enhance competitiveness of faculty and staff salaries; (Goal 3)
4. Enhance funding for core institutional operations, for utilization of technology, and for construction, operation and maintenance of facilities; (Goal 7)
5. Review and refine the budget development and allocation processes and develop performance and productivity measures; (Goal 7)
6. Complete review and development of institutional missions; (Goals 1-11)
7. Enhance support programs and services related to student recruitment and retention and to nontraditional students; (Goal 4)
8. Enhance undergraduate education and teacher preparation, mathematics, science, and engineering programs; (Goal 3)
9. Enhance research and economic development activities; (Goal 5)
10. Enhance efforts to promote ethnic and gender diversity; (Goal 8)
11. Improve operational efficiency and effectiveness and develop accountability measures; (Goal 7) and
12. Initiate implementation of the Higher Education Summit recommendations. (Goal 11)

Note: The Goal(s) which the Priority reflects is in parentheses.